

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-29 (canceled)

30. (currently amended) A method for producing a high-molecular weight flocculant comprising the step of:

hydrolyzing hydrolysing a high-molecular weight polymeric material containing having at least one cyano groups to thereby converting at least a portion of the said at least one cyano groups into at least one carbamoyl groups.

31. (currently amended) The method ~~for producing a high-molecular flocculant as claimed in according to claim 30 wherein said hydrolysis is carried out in one step hydrolyzing step occurs~~ in the presence of an acidic catalyst.

32. (currently amended) The method ~~for producing a high-molecular flocculant as claimed in according to claim 30, wherein said hydrolysis hydrolyzing step further comprises the steps of is carried out in two steps, namely a first step (a) employing an acidic catalyst; and a second step of (b) employing a basic catalyst, and wherein, in said second step, a further portion of the said at least one carbamoyl groups is converted into at least one carboxylic groups or salts thereof.~~

33. (currently amended) The high-molecular flocculant as claimed in method
according to claim 30 wherein a said high-molecular weight polymeric material containing
comprises acrylonitrile as a monomer unit is used as the high-molecular material.

34. (currently amended) The high-molecular flocculant as claimed in method
according to claim 33 30 wherein said polymeric material is selected from the group consisting
~~at least one selected from the group of~~ acrylic fibers, nitrite resins, styrene-acrylonitrile resins,
acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene resins, acrylonitrile-styrene-acrylic resins, acrylonitrile-
chlorinated polyethylene-styrene resins, nitrite rubbers and acrylonitrile-butadiene rubbers is
used as said high-molecular material.

35. (currently amended) The high-molecular flocculant as claimed in method
according to claim 30 wherein a high-molecular said polymeric material containing comprises at
least one cyano group wherein said at least one cyano group comprises not less than 15 mol % of
the total monomer units present in said polymeric material is used as said high-molecular
material.

Claims 36-39 (canceled)